

400 DEAD.

St. Louis and East St. Louis Visited by a Frightful Tornado Yesterday Afternoon.

Thousands Injured.

Hundreds of People Believed to Be Still Buried in the Ruins of Buildings.

MILLIONS SWEEP AWAY.

The Storm Wrecked Buildings of All Kinds, Especially Along the River Front.

MANY VESSELS WRECKED

Steamboats and Barges Torn From Their Moorings and Dashed to Splinters—Many on Board Lost.

FIRE ADDS TO THE HORROR

A Number of the Wrecked Buildings Burned.

St. Louis, Mo., May 28.—When the sun rose on St. Louis and vicinity this morning it showed a scene of terrible ruin and disaster, wind, rain and fire having combined in a mission of destruction.

At least 200 lives were lost in this city and as many more in East St. Louis, while thousands were injured, many so severely that they cannot recover. The exact number of dead and injured will, however, not be known for many days, for the debris of ruined buildings undoubtedly covers scores of people.

The damage and destruction of property will aggregate many million dollars, but the exact amount cannot be estimated with any degree of certainty.

The tornado, which caused this destruction, struck the city yesterday afternoon at 5:15 o'clock and soon swept to East St. Louis. The greatest damage on this side of the river was inflicted within a three mile strip along the Mississippi. Many buildings were totally wrecked by the force of the wind and others were unroofed, while very few escaped some injury. Signs and cornices were torn off, shade trees and everything else suffered.

200 DEAD—THOUSANDS INJURED

Health Commissioner Starkloff, two hours after the tornado had passed, feared that the dead would reach 200 and that not fewer than 1,000 persons had sustained serious injuries. By midnight Associated Press reporters had visited all of the stricken portion of the city suburbs and Dr. Starkloff's estimates were fully confirmed. The dead were found in all parts of the devastated section, while crushed beneath falling walls, hurled against the sides of buildings, struck by flying timbers, cut by the shattered glass, shocked by the net work of down wires, humanity suffered in ways innumerable and the names of all the injured will never be known. Enough were recorded at the dispensaries last night to show how wide spread were the tornado's effects.

Of the destruction of property there can be no satisfactory estimate given. The loss in extent and in character is beyond conception.

HUNDREDS OF BUILDINGS DOWN.

All the way from Papin street to Carondelet the storm put a stamp on the face of the city that will not be effaced for years. Big, strong buildings fell before the wind like houses made of cards.

From where it entered the city, out in the southwestern suburbs, to where it left it, somewhere near the Eads bridge, there is a wide path of ruins. Factory after factory went down and piles of bricks and timbers mark the spots on which they stood. Dwellings were picked up and thrown in every direction. Business houses were flattened. There was no chance for the escape of the occupants. The ruins covered, bruised and mangled bodies that will not be uncovered until a systematic search is made. Hundreds of families in South St. Louis are homeless, practically, and the temporary hospitals shelter scores and hundreds.

THE COURSE OF THE STORM.

The tornado struck St. Louis on the southwest at a point just north of Tower Grove park and ran in a northeasterly direction until it reached Grand avenue. From there it followed Mill creek valley clear to the river, veering slightly to the north when it reached tenth street. At the levee it swung around almost at a right angle, and swept straight

up the river to beyond Venice and Madison, where it veered to the east again.

The worst damage was done in a path about six blocks wide, extending eastward from Grand avenue to tenth street. From Lafayette avenue on the south to the railroad tracks on the north, about every other block the wind seemed to reach out and crush a few buildings and unroof residences outside of its main path. Every wire along Chouteau avenue from Grand avenue east to tenth street was down and the poles and their heavy freight of cables were scattered along the street.

THE CITY HOSPITAL'S DAMAGE.

In the flashes of lightning last night the city hospital looked like a ruin. The surgical ward was partly demolished. Portions of the other buildings were unroofed. Walls were cracked. Even in the darkness the physicians began the removal of patients to temporary quarters, fearful that the strained structure would go down in a general collapse. There were 450 sick people in the hospital when the storm came. Some gathered strength in their fright and ran shrieking from the place, finding shelter on the outside. Thirteen were injured in one ward.

The city hall and the Four Courts were in the path of the cloud as it passed from the city hospital toward the river, and both were damaged. Part of the jail wall was demolished.

Convention hall lost a part of the roof on the eastern end and the east end was punctured in several places by flying missiles, and sustained some derangement of the interior. Ten days work and the expenditure of \$5,000 will make the hall good again.

SCORES OF BUILDINGS WRECKED.

In the district between Sixth street and river northward from Chouteau avenue, the tornado tore a diagonal path. The district comprises business houses, many of them older type. Every building within the path sustained damage. Smoke stacks and chimneys were toppled over. Walls were leveled and roofs were lifted. Thousands of windows were broken and miles of telegraph and telephone wires were left in a network on the ground. Through this district the streets are impassable. They are covered in places with debris ten feet deep.

Along the levee front the hawyers snapped and boats were sent adrift, some to go down, others to go ashore on the eastern bank. The loss of life which might have been averted by the hour at which the tornado came. A little later the excursion steamers would have been going out. None of them had left their wharves. Other river passenger boats had gone an hour before and although not heard from, probably had passed out of danger.

THE EAST ST. LOUIS HAVOC.

The death dealing cloud crossed the river at such an angle as to strike and wreck the upper works at the east end of the Eads bridge and to sweep a part of East St. Louis in comparison to its size the fatalities and losses in East St. Louis greatly exceed those on this side of the river. The larger part of the central portion of the city is razed to the ground, while on the flats along the river back to the north of the Eads bridge not a house is left standing. In the latter portion the loss of life is terrible. Scarcely a family seems to have escaped without some member being killed, while in many instances whole households were wiped out of existence. The Catholic church of St. John of Nepomuk, at the corner of Twelfth and Soudard streets, was destroyed, except the front, which stands like a tower, all side and back walls being completely destroyed.

Fire added much to the loss account. Down wires, wild currents of electricity, crushed buildings, all contributed to this element of destruction. The alarm system was paralyzed. Approaches were blocked. \$200,000 conflagration on the St. Louis side was supplemented by a dozen lesser fires. In East St. Louis a mill was burned and two other considerable losses were sustained. To the enormous total, fires added at least 1/2 million dollars. Such another night of horror may St. Louis never know.

HOW THE GREAT STORM CAME.

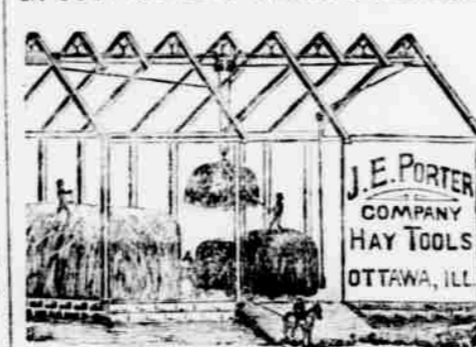
Hours of depressing sultriness, puffs of wind coming by turns from all points of the compass, heavy clouds at all points of the horizon and light, mistlike formations flying across the dull, dark colored masses, were the characteristics of the afternoon which brought to St. Louis the most disastrous storm in the city's history. For hours the currents shifted, the wind blew hot and cold and the storm center developed.

The early mutterings indicated nothing more alarming than a down-pour with the ordinary electrical accompaniments. This rain cloud came up slowly at first, from the west beyond Forest park. As the black rim mounted higher above the horizon, its embrace more territory to the north and south. A strong wind from the east began to

Deacon Bros. & Co.

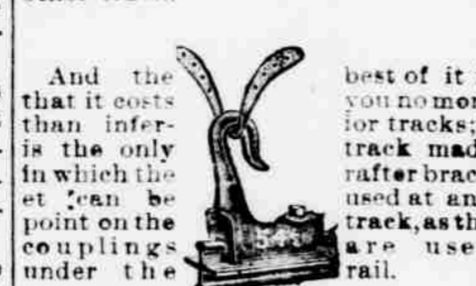
Heavy and Shell Hardware, Cutlery and Gun Tackle and stores, Field and Garden Seeds, Buggies, Wagons, and Farm Machinery, wagon, wood-work, iron, steel, nails, salt, Barb Wire, Buggy Paints, Machine Oils.

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We have a very extensive line of hay carriers, forks, pulleys, floor hooks, manilla and sisal rope. We would like to have you call and see J. E. Porter's new Columbian carriers also his Columbian steel track. You can see by this little picture that it has nearly double the strength of any other track.



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blow right in the face of the storm. It was a lower current. It raised the dark cloud and brought it forward faster and faster. Suddenly the wind stopped blowing from the east and there swept from the northwest a terrific gale which made the best built structures tremble.

With the hurricane, for that was the first form look when it broke over the western part of the city, came a deluge of rain. For half an hour, from a few minutes before 5:30, this hurricane blew from the northwest. Then there came a lull.

The currents shifted to the southwest, and there came into existence a storm cloud with the essential feature of the tornado, the funnel shape. This second storm burst upon the city from the southwest. It came in on the south side of Lafayette park, struck the city hospital and from there tore its way through the city to the river by the northeasterly course. It wrought such havoc as will long leave traces in that part of the city which lies east of Seventh street and north of Cerre street to the Eads bridge. The boats at the wharf were torn from their moorings and capsized or went adrift. The cloud crossed the river demolished the upper work at the east end of the bridge and then it wreaked its fury on East St. Louis.

The district between Clark avenue and Washington avenue, from Twelfth street to the river suffered fearfully from the ravages of the tornado. The brunt of the violence of the storm was borne by the portion of the district lying south and along the river bank, as comparatively light damage was done to the property further north and west. The tornado vented its greatest fury along the river front, and the levee for miles up and down was devastated and laid waste. Great steamers were torn from their moorings at the first blast and blown down the river for miles.

Of all the craft that lined the river for miles, but one remains to tell the story of the disaster. It hung steadily to its moorings throughout.

When the tornado struck the water the light of day vanished in a moment, and those at work on the levee could barely discern the forms of the steamers as, one after another, they pitched and finally, with a crash, were blown out into the dark waters and disappeared. The scene was one of wild uncertainty and chaos. No one knew whether to seek safety from the fury of the storm.

RUIN ON THE RIVER FRONT.

After the tornado had passed it

left a scene of desolation where ten minutes before steamers had rocked quietly at their docks, some just arrived and discharging their passengers, others preparing for departure. Trucks and baggage had been tossed hither and thither, most of it into the river; plows and agricultural implements had been distributed up and down the levee as far as could be seen, and the whole appearance was that of waste and wreck.

The steamer, J. J. Odell of the Illinois River packet line was blown out from its wharf at the foot of Morgan street, crashed into the second pier of the Eads bridge and sank. Her boilers blew up before she disappeared. She had a crew of twelve, and three women passengers, besides her captain, George Townsend, an old river man. Three of her crew reached land safely. Two of them jumped before the explosion and caught driftwood. The other was blown overboard by the explosion and was cut about the head, but managed to swim ashore. Three others of the crew clung to the pier and made their way up to the bridge proper.

There is no way of estimating the number of lives that were lost on the river craft that happened to be near when the tornado came. Hundreds of barges were moored all along the river bank. In some instances as many as ten or twelve persons were on board when the anchorage gave way under the terrible strain. Men were blown down into the water and the destruction of life will be large.

Several boats were jerked from their moorings and carried down the river, rolling over, and finally struck the raft of the Wiggins Ferry company at the foot of Chouteau avenue, where it sank.

PARTIAL ST. LOUIS LOSSES.

The roof of the Republican convention hall was blown off and a twenty four foot section of the western wall of the city jail clear down, exposing the interior. It was during the exercise hours and 200 prisoners were exercising in the building. They were panic stricken. They were too frightened to try to escape. Jailer Wagner was on the scene in a moment and with the aid of a number of detectives and policemen the prisoners were placed in their cells.

The tanks of the Waters Pierce Oil company on Gratiot street were blown up, spreading destruction on every hand.

Three stories of the Coe Manufacturing company's building, Ninth and Gratiot, and nearly half of the Wainwright brewery were blown down.

The Summer High school, Eleventh and Spruce, McDermott's saloon, Eleventh and Chestnut, the Central Emigrant, on the opposite corner, and Jere Sheehan's livery stable, Eleventh and Walnut were unroofed.

The Consolidated wire works building at Twenty first and Papin streets were almost totally wrecked. Seven people are known to have been injured seriously by this wreck and many more are said to have been hurt by falling walls.

The two story building of the C. H. Sawyer Manufacturing company, 1819 Chouteau avenue, was demolished. John Sawyer, a member of the firm, and Emma Cheney and Isabella Hamden, typewriters, were crushed to death under the walls. H. H. Sawyer, a member of the firm, was injured fatally.

The St. Louis Refrigerator and Woodenware company's factory was completely destroyed by fire caused by lightning. The loss is estimated at \$300,000.

One corner of the city hospital was blown out and the building otherwise damaged. One patient died from fright and two others were killed by falling debris, with many seriously injured, a number of whom will die.

The Siddell & Shenley building, at Seventh and Rudger streets fell in and it is rumored that eighteen women were buried in the ruins.

Engine house No. 1 was blown down and all of the fireman buried.

The Laclede Gas company's tank at Fourteenth and Gratiot streets was struck by lightning and exploded.

The Samuel Cupples Woodenware company's warehouse at Seventh and Spruce streets was burned.

WRECKS ALONG THE STREETS.

Six unknown men were taken out of the ruins of a box factory at Ninth and Barry.

The Foundling asylum at Hickory and Elm is a complete wreck.

On South Jefferson avenue four fine residences were completely wrecked.

Ganale's lumber yard was struck by lightning and destroyed, and Annunciation church at Sixth and La Salle was blown down.

The St. Louis Cracker company's building at Eighteenth and Gholson is a wreck.

At Broadway and Soudard streets a four story brick building collapsed, burying several families.

Sixty men were at work on the framework of the Liggett & Myers new tobacco factory, twenty or thirty

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escaped with injuries, while the remainder are thought to be buried in the ruins.

Craver's planing mill at Craver and Arsenal streets was destroyed.

The roof of the South St. Louis Turner hall Thirteenth and Arsenal streets, was blown in.

The Carondelet Gas and Electric company buildings were considerably damaged.

The Hydraulic Press work, Manchester road and Frisco railroad tracks, were blown down; damage, \$15,000.

The St. Louis Refrigerator and Wooden Gutter company's entire plant at Main and Park was destroyed. The plant consisted of a four-story factory, a four story warehouse, a bicycle factory and several smaller buildings. When the cyclone struck the plant there were at work between 400 and 500 men and women. Fire broke out in the warehouse just after the top floor was destroyed. The panic stricken employees rushed pell mell from the buildings, leaving many disabled behind them. To add to their horror hundreds of pieces of heavy lumber from adjoining lumber yards came flying through the air and forced many back into the blazing buildings.

The top floor of the four story building at Second and Chestnut streets was blown off.

The structure occupied by Dan Gunn as a notion store at 2102 Clark avenue was demolished.

The Central Home of Rest was demolished and one man killed, name unknown. Two were injured.

The copper roof of the shields, on Seventh between Riddle and Carr streets, was blown off.

The front walls of the building at 406 8 South Twelfth street were blown down. Some of the occupants were slightly bruised.

At the Globe Shoe and Clothing company the windows of the upper floors were blown in and damage was done to merchandise amounting to thousands of dollars.

The roofs and skylights of the Merchants Exchange building were blown off. The damage is extensive.

The cigar store at the bridge entrance of Third and Washington avenues was blown into the streets.

The Paper Cotton compress company's building near the foot of Convent street and the St. Louis cotton compress building, both one story buildings, were demolished.

Strickler's cigar store, Broadway and Biddell street, lost a fifty foot front. Mrs. Strickler was sitting in the front doorway at the time with her baby in her arms, but was unhurt.

The storm tore off half of the roof of the National Paper company's building, south eighth street, and demolished the shipping room on the first floor. Total damage about \$40,000.

At the burning St. Louis refrigerator and gutter warehouse several injured firemen had been taken from the wreck and three more were known to be in the cellar dead.

Three brothers, named Hardy, were dangerously injured. It was said that probably seventy more were still buried in the ruins. As the storm was at its height the gas hold at Eighteenth street collapsed. People were terrified by columns of burning gas leaping high in the air. The old three story building on the southeast corner of Main and Pine streets, occupied by the St. Louis Commission company, is a total wreck.

Pine street was filled with wreckage and debris to the height of ten feet.

The storm visited the store of Penny & Gentles at the corner of Broadway and Franklin avenue. The plate glass windows on all sides were completely demolished and the water deluged the store in torrents.

About the Iron Mountain railroad yards were strewn about like hail. In some cases switch targets were broken off by the flying timbers. Planks were driven into the earth and broken off. Freight cars were demolished and merchandise scat

tered in all directions.

The wind lifted the roof off Chas. H. Peck's new building, to the north of the Wall Paper company, and blew down the wall of a new brick building two doors further north. It almost demolished the building of William Koenig & Co., agents of Aultman & Co., agricultural implements. The roof and ceiling to the first floor were wrecked and the occupants of the offices saved their lives by taking refuge in the vault. The building of the American Refrigerator Transit company, at the levee and Cedar street, were badly demolished.

The Terminal elevator, Biddle and Main was robbed of the south end wall on the first floor.

The fourth story and roof of McPheeter's dry goods warehouse on the levee, between Biddle and Carr streets, was blown off.

The front and roof of Fisher & Davis' three story brick saw mill machinery house, 1724-26 North Main was wrecked.

The roof and smokestacks of the Fulton iron works and machine shop, Fulton and Carr, were blown off and the roof was blown off a vacant building belonging to the Dr. J. H. McLean estate, Collins and Biddle.

Upon the levee and Carr street the wind played sad havoc. The immense freight shed of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad, two blocks long and one wide, extending from Carr street to Frankin avenue, is a total wreck.

St. Louis, May 27.—At East St. Louis houses, factories and workshops along Front street were cut to the ground and many other structures wrecked.

How many lives were snuffed out under the wrecks it will take time to find out. Two hundred is thought to be a conservative estimate of the number of the dead. The three story frame hotel of Wm. Wicker, in which were fifteen or twenty people, went down with a crash.

Among the buildings destroyed were the city hall, the police station the Tremont house, the Baltimore & Ohio and Vandalia railroad round houses. Every freight house on the island, the Wiggins Ferry company's warehouse, the Standard Oil works, the Griggins hotel, the Workman's bank and Harris' cooper shop.

After the wind and rain had done its work fire added to the destruction. Retzel's mill was the first to become ignited and it was totally destroyed at a loss of \$150,000. Harris' Barrel factory, nearly fifty loaded cars in the terminal yards, Lynch's boarding house, Heard's feed store, Lee's blacksmith shop and other smaller places were burned. The destruction of the water works early in the storm cut off the water supply and Chief Purly and his men fought the fire with a bucket brigade as best they could. The whole central portion of the city was threatened by the burning mill, but all hands worked with such a will that its further spread was prevented. The fire caused consternation.

This year will stand as a record breaker for tornadoes and great loss of life. Within the last thirteen days there have been storms which have caused the loss of 650 people and the injury of probably twice as many more.

The first of three big tornadoes was at and around Sherman, Texas. Eighty-five persons killed within Sherman and fully 125 injured, while 35 persons lost their lives in towns southwest of Sherman and several hundred received injuries. Two days later—May 17—Northern Kansas was swept by a terrible "twister." The total loss of life was near thirty, with scores of injured. May 25 occurred the storms in Mahan, Illinois and Iowa, in which 100 souls perished either by the wind or drowning in the floods. Last night occurred the storm in St. Louis by which 400 people perished, making the awful total of 660 actual dead since April 12.